5

A SERMON

Preached at
St. *Michaels* Church in CAMBRIDGE,
on the 26th of JULY 1685.

Being appointed the DAY of

Publick Thanksgiving

FOR

HIS MAJESTIES

late VICTORY over the Rebels.

By WILLIAM GOSTWYKE
Fellow of *Trinity College*.

CAMBRIDGE,
Printed by *John Hayes* Printer to the University.
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A

SERMON

Preached at

St. Mary's Church in CAMBRIDGE,

on the 24th of JULY 1685.

Being appointed the DAY of

Publick Thanksgiving

FOR

HIS MAJESTIES

late VICTORY against the Rebels.

BIBLIOTHECA·BODLEIANA·

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Prov. 11. 21.

Though hand join in hand, the Wicked shall not be Unpunished.

THE Wisdom of *Solomon* though it was much ingaged in the contemplation of natural things, yet since it was obtained of God for the better government of that People that was committed to his charge, can never

never be ſuppoſed to have been more ſignall in any point than in Politicall Obſervations. He as a King well underſtood the Duty of his Place, the Power that was repoſed in him, and the Obedience that was required of them whom God had placed under his Command: He knew the things that contributed to the happineſs of a Kingdom, and what were the moſt likely means either to eſtabliſh, or ſhake his Throne, and therefore in the Words before us forewarns his Subjects againſt Popular Tumults and Inſurrections, ſhews them the danger that there was, though they were many, and He but One, of entring into Leagues and Aſſociations againſt their King. But if the Jews gave ear to this as the inſtruction of a wiſe and prudent Gover-

nour,

nour, it recommends it self to us with a more preſſing obligation of being regiſtred among thoſe Truths which we acknowledge to proceed from God; and from that ſtamp of the Divine Authority impreſſed upon it, we may reap this advantage, That though the World preſents us only with a proſpect of our danger from the Heat and Fury of an Audacious People, the Church (that always was the refuge of the Godly) ſuggeſts unto us more comfortable meditations of Safety and Deliverance. Here we have ancient and undoubted Monuments of Gods protection of his People, and out of them this Maxim drawn by the obſervation of the Wiſeſt Man, That Inſurrections of wicked doers cannot be proſperous, that neither Strength nor Multitudes

titudes can render their Attempts ſucceſsfull, or ſecure them from Defeat, but *though hand joyn in hand*, though there be Numbers combined together, yet ſhall they not eſcape Gods righteous judgment, or go away unpuniſhed.

The *joyning* of *hands* hath always been the ſymbol and token of friendſhip, and an engagement of mutual Help and Aſſiſtance; but what is friendſhip amongſt good and honeſt Men, is amongſt wicked People conſpiracie in iniquity, always deſigned to the miſchief of more Righteous perſons than themſelves, and therefore bad in whatſoever ſort of men are engaged in it; but if it be againſt their Prince, againſt their Laws and Government, then it amounts to Treaſon and Rebellion, the worſt of Crimes. So that

in

in Treating of these Words I shall shew you

First, The Heinousness of this Sin, when *wicked* Men *joyn hand in hand* and combine together, and

Secondly, Present you with some Reasons whence you may conclude, *they shall not be unpunished.*

First, Of the Heinousness of this Sin, which is so hatefull both to God and Man, as it hath been adjudged in both the Courts of Heaven and Earth, to be capitall above all other. How highly God detests it, we may hear him speaking by the mouth of one of his Prophets. 1 *Sam.* 15. 23. *Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and Stubbornes is as iniquity and idolatry. Witchcraft* is nothing less then a renouncing

God, and entring into a Solemn League and Covenant with his greateſt enemy the devil: *Idolatry* is the forſaking Him to whom we owe the higheſt Worſhip and Allegiance, and paying a Devotion to them that are not Gods; whom we unjuſtly ſet up over us, attributing an Imaginary power to them, who are not able either to ſecure themſelves, or give any ſuccour or protection: and then how nearly is Rebellion joyned, how fitly to be compared with either of theſe, is eaſie to be obſerved in all its Proceedings. For Rebels either renounce their Allegiance to their natural Prince, who is and ſhould be in Gods ſtead over them; and joyn themſelves to ſome that is his Enemy, as in the caſe of Witchcraft, or elſe they ſet up Heads of their

their own, and pay their worſhip to the Works of their own hands, making them Rulers whom they know to be no Such, and ſtand in fear, and reverence of a power of their own Creating; which is but too conformable to the notion of Idolatry: then like the fooliſh *Iſraelites*, though they knew it was their Prieſt that made the Molten Calf, at their own Charges, and the expence of their own Gold, and that but Yeſterday, yet to ſuch Idols muſt be aſcribed the glory of the nobleſt Actions; Theſe muſt become the Workers of a bleſſed Reformation; 'Tis by their guidance People muſt be brought from ignorance and Superſtition, to the Light and Truth of the Goſpel; even according to the letter of the old Song, *Theſe are thy Gods O Iſrael* Exod. 32.4.

rael that brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

'Tis by this Name the Idolatry of the *Israelites* is often branded, of which God thus complains, *Ezek.* 20. 8. *They rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me*; and wherein this Rebellion did consist he proceeds to illustrate, in that *they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the Idols of Egypt.* And in the 1st of *Isai.* v. 2. he is introduced proclaiming of it to all the World, *Hear O Heavens and give ear O Earth: for the Lord hath spoken; I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have Rebelled against me.* So great a Crime as this not deserving to be put up in silence, or whispered in the ear, nay

nay the houſe-tops were not high enough to proclaim it from, but the whole Creation is made to ring with the loud Infamy of ſo great a Wickedneſs. And how deteſtable it is amongſt Men, the concurrent practice of all Nations will atteſt, ſo tender do their Laws declare them of the Perſon of their Prince, that 'tis eſteemed Sacred; and they have Scripture too to warrant that Reſpect, which hath ſaid of Princes *that they are Gods*. Pſal. 82. 6.

And our own Laws have ſo provided for Them and their Security from any Actual Violence, that they have made it Capitall only to Meditate, and Deſign it; that according to the counſel of the Preacher, *Eccl.* 10. 20. we ſhould

ſhould not *curſe the King, no not in our thought, nor the Rich in our bedchamber*, for fear of ſome extraordinary providence that ſhould diſcover our Malice; *leſt a bird of the air ſhould carry the voice, or that which hath wings ſhould tell the matter.*

But not to trouble you any farther with the Heinouſneſs of this Sin, which all good Chriſtians do acknowledge and heartily deteſt, I ſhall only deſire you to conſider whence they that practiſe it took their firſt pattern; 'Twas Satan was the ringleader of the Rebels, who ventured to level his Ambitious thoughts at the Majeſty of Almighty God, and taught his Followers by imitating his Wickedneſs, to exerciſe the patience,

and

and disturb the Happiness of Gods Vicegerents upon earth: so that we may say of them in our Saviours words, *Joh.* 8. 44. *They are of their father the Devil, and the lust of their father they will do.* He was a Rebel from the beginning, and is still such, while he promotes his Kingdom by these his Instruments and Assistants; who of all Men are most likely to be rewarded with a considerable portion in it; beside some other punishment which you may be assured will overtake them, as I propounded for the Second part of my Discourse, if you will consider

First, Who it is that Wicked men engage against in their Rebellion, and that is not only Man but God: for as St. *Paul* saith,

Rom.

Rom. 13. 1, 2. *There is no Power but of God, the Powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God*; and what will be the Effect thereof he further declareth, *they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation*; which as without repentance they are ascertained of; so *fearfull a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God*: yet that they may not wholly seem to be put off to a Future punishment, which Men of their principles may possibly give no belief to,

Heb. 10. 31.

We may conceive in the second place the Wrath of a King (which without *Solomons* telling them they well enough know to be Dreadfull as the *Messengers of Death*) may

Prov. 16. 14.

may torment them with the fear of approaching Justice; which by certain though perhaps slow degrees will go on to overtake them.

For can we think that God who hath made so good provision for the Lives of heathen Princes, that commanded all men to pay Obedience, even to the Enemies and Persecutors of the Church of his Son (for such the Powers were, the Emperours that then ruled when St. *Paul* wrote his Epistles) and will he leave the *Nursing Fathers* of his people, those that resemble Himself in the similitude of their Love and Tenderness to his Flock, as well as in the Power they have received from him? Can we, I say, imagine that such

ſhould be left deſtitute of his Immediate protection? who being as they ought to be, *not a*
Rom. 13. 4 *Terrour to Good Works* muſt needs be ſuch to the Evil; and as they
----5. are ordained *Gods Miniſters for good to us*, ſo are they in like manner by him appointed *Revengers to execute wrath upon him that doth evil*: who having the Juſtice of the Cauſe on their ſide, fight to maintain Gods right as well as their own, have a good Conſcience animating them within, have the Hearts and Hands of all that are Loyall, the Prayers of all that are Devout to aſſiſt them. Such Forces are not eaſily overthrown, by Men whoſe conſciences fly in their faces; whoſe guilt conveys more fear into their Hearts, than their Deſpair of pardon (whence com-

commonly their Rage: proceeds) can ſupply them with of valour and reſolution.

But it is true that Temporal puniſhment hath not always been allotted to Rebels and Traytors; ſometimes their Arms have proſpered in deſpite of Juſtice, and their Impiety hath been rewarded with Victory and Succeſs; yet we have known ſuch Men before this time who have found a Turn of their good Fortune, and by their Infamous and Deſerved Deaths have left a Teſtimony to the World, that Rebellion though it may be ſucceſsfull, is not always long-liv'd; and if ſuch wicked Courſes may at ſome time raiſe a man High, yet they never put him out of danger or fear

of Falling: and such a Mans punishment cannot always be deferred which Justice longs to inflict on him, either by the open force and power of his Prince; or the Secret Treachery of his own Party. For who can repose sufficient Confidence in them whom their Allegiance could not contain within the bounds of Loyalty? And there are Examples to be found, of Men that have bought their peace with the Lives of their Confederates, and by giving up their Fellows Heads, made composition for their Own. Which we may be the rather induced to beleeve, if

Thirdly, We consider what bad entertainment Rebellious practices have hitherto found in the world; in

in that he that has once dared to violate the Majesty of Kings, hath seldome found all the *Hands* that he could *joyn* together sufficient to uphold an Usurped Throne; and hath taught others to bear no more respect to himself than he hath shewed, and given them besides, a pretence to dispossess him for Unjustly Invading anothers Right: which being once taken away, and Power become the Rule of Justice; there have often risen up a Sort of Men pretending to it, who never failed to give one another their Deserved punishment.

I shall not mention any thing in Humane Writers to illustrate this, but confine my self wholly to Divine Authority; especially becaus

because the Spirit of Rebellion that any time within these late Years hath been Disturbing the peace and happiness of these Kingdoms, hath always made pretences to Religion, wherewith it sought to colour and maintain its Wickedness.

Judg. 9. *Abimelech* the son of *Gideon* was an early Usurper of the Liberties of his people, and strengthened himself by the Confederacy of the *Shechemites*, and the murder of Seventy of his Brethren; yet after three years time, himself became a means to punish those his Instruments in wickedness, with the destruction of all their City, for their Rebellion against him; and He received his punishment by the hand of a Woman, God making use of the

the weakneſs of that Sex to deſtroy him that had many Hands and a great Army joyned with him.

'Twas the conſideration of ſome ſuch Divine vengeance to enſue, that reſtrained *Davids* hand from ſlaying *Saul*, whom though his bitter Enemy, and at that very time ſeeking his Life, in that he was the Lords Anointed he would not kill, though he had a notable opportunity, though he was inſtigated by his Servants with the remembrance of the promiſe of the Lord, *to deliver his Enemy into his hand, that he might do to him as it ſhould ſeem good unto him.* Whereas could Opportunity have tempted him to a Rebellious thought, or his Confidence in the Strength and Valour of his Aſſiſtants have

1 Sam. 24.

1 Sam. 26.

wrought

wrought him to an Action which he acknowledged no man could do and be Guiltleſs, he might as eaſily have cut off his Head, as the Skirt of his Robe, and taken away his Life, as the Spear which was ſet to defend it. But 'tis no wonder if a righteous Man would not venture on ſuch a piece of Wickedneſs (though with ſome reaſon he might have promiſed himſelf Freedom from being puniſhed for it by any Humane means, being ſo well accompanied with ſuch Valiant Men ſo ready to defend the Fact) when even a Woman (and ſhe too one of the wickedeſt upon record) had ſo much Naturall Religion in her, as to think no Condition, how great ſoever, ſafe and exempt from Vengeance if it were purchaſed by Rebellion:

'twas

'twas *Jezebel* I mean, who seeing *Jehu* entring the Palace after he had slain her Son, his King, *Jehoram*, chargeth him with Rebellion, and by a late example denounceth the like Vengeance to him, that *Zimri had who slew his master*. So much a Woman that slighted justice in other matters, thought it not possible to be avoided when such a horrid Crime called out to Heaven for it. 2 Kings 9. 31.

And thus indeed it usually has fared with them that think to force their passage to a Crown, most commonly they have perished in the Attempt; or if they have possessed themselves of their Desires, yet then, not all the Strength that they could make, and Guards they set upon their Persons, could ren-

der them Secure from punishment, but usually God hath raised up some to pay them what they have deserved, and render them the fruit of their own Inventions.

And if after so fair warning any that take Rebellious Courses should think to succeed better at last, it appears to me a sign not only of wicked and depraved Manners, but of stupid and sottish Minds; Can they imagine their Hands were stronger than theirs that went before them? yet surely they cannot think to escape Gods justice, or deliver themselves out of his hand.

What shall we think, but that as such Men do approve themselves to be very Evil persons, so have they in a special manner appropri-

ated to themſelves one Character of the Wicked uſed in Scripture, being Men *that forget God*, or have not known him: and that they have as little reaſon to pretend to Religion as to Loyalty, and that their Abſurdity is as great when they declare they ſtand up for Religion, in oppoſition to the Ordinance of God, and the Directions of the Apoſtles, as theirs that formerly pretended to maintain the Authority of the King, to the Ruine of his Kingdoms, and the Deſtruction of his Perſon.

I hope it will be needleſs at this time of day to perſuade men not to cheat themſelves with ſuch nice Diſtinctions, which one word of ſound and reall Wiſdom will preſently ſolve, and this the Wiſe man

teacheth, that you ſhould *fear the Lord, and the King* for his ſake, that you ſhould make your Religion the foundation of your Loy-
Prov. 24. 21,22. alty, and *not meddle with them that are given to change, For their calamity ſhall riſe ſuddenly, and who knoweth the ruine of them both?*

Now God be praiſed we do; and by his mercy are able to retort upon our Republican Party their own Argument drawn from Succeſs, which when it goes along with the Right Side, is then indeed only proper to be urged as a Token of Gods Favour and Approbation. For we have ſeen the Counſels of Crafty men defeated, and the continued Deſigns that have been hatching ſeveral Years, brought to naught in a ſhort while, the

the Numbers that were joyned overthrown and broken, and those that were Expected, rendred Incapable to do Themselves or the Kingdom more Mischief: and though their Strength was formidable, and their Confederates many, yet when we think how they are brought to punishment, we must needs acknowledge the Truth of the Text, that Wicked Men cannot escape without it.

For to say nothing of the private Lives of those that were the Leaders in the late Rebellion, which were sufficient to discountenance their pretences to any kind of Religion; their open Violation of all Honesty and Godliness, Plundering and Killing Men, Ravishing Wives and Virgins, Defacing

facing Churches, and prophaning Altars, are sufficient to shew their Character, and to cry up to Heaven for Vengeance, and make Gods Justice glorious now it is fallen upon them.

And now let us lay hold of the Occasion, by reflecting on Gods judgments upon others, to implore the continuance of his Mercy to our selves in this General Blessing; that God would grant the King a Long and Happy Reign, and save Him from the hands of all His enemies, whom whether it shall please Almighty God to clothe with shame of their Proceedings for their Conversion and Repentance; or by permitting them to go on in their own Obstinate and Destructive Ways, to bring to their Deser-

ved

ved Puniſhment; yet may his Throne be Eſtabliſhed in Righteouſneſs, and on His Head may His Crown flouriſh. *Amen.*

FINIS.